



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

more pure in the source from which it emanates. She has received the ministers of America without either the compliments or the repulsive reserve, which etiquette in other countries exacts; and stationed by Providence in the vanguard of the allied Republics, she forms the rallying point for all those engaged in the great work of consolidating American liberty.'

We could proceed with pleasure to present our readers with other parts, and views of other subjects, from these papers, sure, as we are, that they would not prove uninteresting or useless; but we must, for the present, confine ourselves to the expression of our approbation of the matter and the style of the *Nacional*. For sound, practical, and comprehensive views of government, education, and social order, for good temper, and for intelligence on the subjects of which it undertakes to treat, we know of no work of the kind, at home or abroad, with which it need fear a comparison.

- 12.—*Coleccion de los Viages y Descubrimientos, que hicieron por Mar los Españoles desde Fines del Siglo XV; con varios Documentos inéditos concernientes á la Historia de la Marina Castellana y de los Establecimientos Españoles en Indias; coordinada é ilustrada por DON MARTIN FERNANDEZ DE NAVARRETE, de la Orden de San Juan, Secretario de S. M. &c. 2 tom. 8vo. Madrid, en la Imprenta Real. Año de 1825. De orden de S. M.*

WHATEVER relates to the first discoveries and early history of the New World, is every day becoming an object of deeper curiosity, not more in Europe than among ourselves. The American public has already been informed of the publication of a series of papers and documents, within a few months past, at Madrid, throwing much light on the life, adventures, and discoveries of Columbus. These are contained in the volumes before us, and we find them much more valuable as affording authentic materials for history, than we had anticipated. It is necessary to premise, that the object of the author, Señor de Navarrete, is to publish an extensive work, consisting chiefly of inedited papers, gathered from the ancient archives and libraries of Spain, and designed to be a history of the discoveries made by the Spaniards in various parts of the world, beginning at the close of the fifteenth century. The two volumes now published are the first of the series, and relate exclusively to Columbus.

To the first volume is prefixed a long Introduction, in which the author developes his plan, and gives some account of his progress. He sketches an outline of the state of nautical science in Spain, previous to the enterprises of Columbus, and then goes very fully into an examination of the writers, who have described the acts of the great navigator, particularly those who wrote or lived during his lifetime; among whom were Bernaldez, Peter Martyr, Ferdinand Columbus, Las Casas, and Oviedo. These writers have been the authorities for succeeding historians, nor does the author attempt to weaken the general confidence in them, but his criticisms are bold, candid, and discriminating. He makes it appear, that they were often led astray by their credulity or ignorance, and sometimes by less excusable causes; and although their advantages, in being contemporary with Columbus, enabled them to narrate with accuracy the more prominent events of the time, yet, as they had not access to the numerous unpublished documents, which regulated the movements and unfolded the motives of Columbus, their descriptions must consequently be in many respects imperfect and erroneous. These documents are now brought to light, collected by long research and with great labor, from libraries in different parts of the kingdom. It is more than thirty years since the inquiry for these and other manuscripts was set on foot, and it has been prosecuted with the aid of royal patronage.

The remainder of the first volume, after the Introduction, is occupied by the four voyages of Columbus, separately written, and also several original letters, to which are added other papers by way of illustration. The first voyage is an exceedingly curious document, consisting of about two hundred pages, and written in the form of a journal or diary at sea, each day being noted, and its events recorded, from the time Columbus left Spain till he returned. The manuscript was found accidentally by the author, in the archives of the Duke del Infantado, and in the handwriting of Las Casas. This writer possessed many of Columbus's original papers, which he used in composing his History of the Indies, and from these papers it is understood, that this journal was drawn up by Las Casas himself. In the margin of the manuscript there are also notes in the handwriting of Las Casas. The author speaks of another ancient copy of the journal, but not so old as this. No shadow of suspicion seems to rest on its authenticity, and it must be considered far the most remarkable and curious record in the annals of navigation.

The second voyage is from the Latin of Peter Martyr, but this, as well as the third and fourth, is written in the form of a general narrative, and not as a diary. The manuscript of the third voy-

age was found with that of the first, and in the handwriting of Las Casas.

Two large charts are attached to these voyages, constructed by the author from what he deems the most authentic materials. The first exhibits the track of Columbus in all his voyages across the Atlantic; and the second, the courses he sailed among the West India islands, and along the main land. The whole purports to be an accurate delineation of the courses of his ship, and the points at which he touched, during his four voyages.

The most remarkable feature of these charts is the change of the place, where Columbus first discovered land. Till this work appeared, it had always been taken as a point not to be questioned, we believe, that the first land he saw was the island of St Salvador, or what the natives called Guanahani, between the parallels of 24° and 25° , and in 75° west longitude. But the author uses strong arguments to prove, that this could not have been the island first discovered, and he fixes upon the largest of the Turk's Islands, in latitude $21^{\circ} 30'$, and longitude 71° , being more than three hundred miles to the south east of St Salvador. He is very confident as to the accuracy of this deviation from the popular opinion, and his reasonings are forcible.

The second volume of the work is composed of official papers, called *Diplomatic Documents*, arranged in chronological order, beginning June 25th, 1474, and ending January 16th, 1515. Each paper is accompanied with its appropriate date, and a note stating the library, or archives, in which the original is deposited. They relate in various ways to the public affairs of Columbus, and, in connexion with the public documents recently published at Genoa, called *Codice Diplomatico Colombo-Americano*, (see North American Review, Vol XXI, p. 398, for Oct. 1825) they probably supply all that can be desired to present a complete view of the subject. In one of these documents, Columbus states expressly in two separate places, that he was born in Genoa; *siendo yo nacido en Genova*; and again, *en ella nació*. It is well known, that a spirited controversy has been kept up for many years in Italy, respecting the birthplace of Columbus, this honor having been claimed by several cities. A knowledge of the three words last quoted, and of the document in which they are contained, would have prevented this warm contest, and saved a vast expense of time and temper in composing, and of patience in reading, the learned disquisitions, that have been sent out on both sides of the question.

As we intend hereafter to spread the contents of these very curious volumes more at large before our readers, we shall forbear saying more at present. We hope they will be translated,

and given to the public in our vernacular tongue. It is a tribute, which every American, whatever language he may speak, owes to the great name of Columbus, to preserve and cherish everything that tends to impress more deeply on the memory the testimony of his great deeds and character, and to kindle the warmest veneration and gratitude, which, after all, are but feeble returns for the perils he encountered, and the sacrifices, sufferings, and mortification he endured, in discovering a new world, and laying the foundation of future empires. If we estimate greatness by the consequences of a man's conceptions and acts, and by the virtuous means employed in attaining extraordinary ends, the name of Columbus stands out on the list of fame, alone, unapproached, and unapproachable. There was but one new world to discover, and the exploits of an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Bonaparte, fade away into insignificance, when compared with the sublime picture of Columbus, crossing the trackless ocean in search of a world unknown, but which his superior genius had told him must exist; and when compared with his struggles against the tide of fortune, the jealousy of powerful rivals, and the perfidy of kings, in establishing the conquests of his enterprise and talents. And if we look at results, all the efforts of all that have been called great, are but a feather in the balance against the train of consequences, that has flowed, and will continue to flow, from the discoveries of Columbus. It is, therefore, peculiarly proper, that these papers should be translated and published in America.

A rumor has gone abroad, that our distinguished countryman, Washington Irving, is engaged in the task at Madrid, but we have the best authority for stating, that this is not the fact. We believe he had it in contemplation, and went to Spain partly for this purpose, but at length relinquished the project, as not altogether in accordance with his former habits of thought and study. We trust he is employed in compositions which will demand more from his own resources, and that his name will continue to shine, as heretofore, with its own lustre. Other writers may translate with elegance and accuracy, but to whom shall we look, except to the author himself, for a continuation of the 'Sketch Book?' Let these interesting documents be translated and published here. It is a proper object for the enterprise of any individual, or even the patronage of government. They certainly pertain as much to us as to Spain, and yet they have been printed in Madrid, not only with the approbation of the king, but at his royal press, and on his account. We should be mortified to have it directly stated, that we do less as a nation for the cause of letters, and our own history, than the government of Spain, whose liberality and literary propensities we are not in the habit of extolling.

Here is a case, however, in which it would be a wise, a liberal, and generous course to follow in the steps of Ferdinand.

Señor de Navarrete intends continuing his work with despatch. The third volume will contain documents relating to discoveries in Florida, and on the main land round the Gulf of Mexico; and the fourth will be devoted to the conquests of Cortes. He will then proceed in course to the expeditions to La Plata, the Straits of Magellan, Chili, Peru, and California, to the discoveries in the South Sea, and to the Molucca and Philippine Islands; thus embracing the whole compass of Spanish discoveries by sea, during the last three hundred years.

We shall translate here a remarkable statement, which the author introduces as a note in his first volume, and in which the invention of the steam boat is ascribed to a Spaniard nearly three hundred years ago. The account is as follows.

‘Blasco de Garay, a sea captain, exhibited to the emperor and king, Charles the Fifth, in the year 1543, an engine by which ships and vessels of the larger size could be propelled, even in a calm, without the aid of oars or sails.

‘Notwithstanding the opposition which this project encountered, the emperor resolved, that an experiment should be made, as in fact it was with success, in the harbor of Barcelona, on the seventeenth of June, 1543.

‘Garay never publicly exposed the construction of his engine, but it was observed at the time of the experiment that it consisted of a large caldron or vessel of boiling water, and a moveable wheel attached to each side of the ship.

‘The experiment was made on a ship of two hundred tons, arrived from Colibre to discharge a cargo of wheat at Barcelona; it was called the Trinity, and the captain’s name was Peter de Scarza.

‘By order of Charles the Fifth, and the prince, Philip the Second, his son, there were present at the time, Henry de Toledo, the governor Peter Cardona, the treasurer Ravago, the Vice Chancellor Francis Gralla, and many other persons of rank, both Castellians and Catalonians; and among others, several sea captains witnessed the operation, some in the vessel, and others on the shore.

‘The emperor and prince, and others with them, applauded the engine, and especially the expertness with which the ship could be tacked. The treasurer, Ravago, an enemy to the project, said it would move two leagues in three hours. It was very complicated and expensive, and exposed to the constant danger of bursting the boiler. The other commissioners affirmed that the vessel could be tacked twice as quick as a galley, served by the

common method, and that at its slowest rate it would move a league in an hour.

‘The exhibition being finished, Garay took from the ship his engine, and having deposited the woodwork in the arsenal of Barcelona, kept the rest himself.

‘Notwithstanding the difficulties and opposition thrown in the way by Ravago, the invention was approved, and if the expedition, in which Charles the Fifth was then engaged, had not failed, it would undoubtedly have been favored by him. As it was, he raised Garay to a higher station, gave him a sum of money (200,000 maravedies) as a present, ordered all the expenses of the experiment to be paid out of the general treasury, and conferred upon him other rewards.

‘Such are the facts collected from the original registers, preserved in the royal archives at Samáncas, among the public papers of Catalonia, and those of the secretary at war, for the year 1543.’

This statement was communicated to the author in a letter from *Thomas Gonzalez*, dated at Samáncas, the twentyseventh of August, 1825; and it would appear, that he had recently consulted the public records to which he refers.

A Review of the ‘Diplomacy of the United States,’ and also one of the ‘Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone,’ we are obliged to defer.
